



# HI-Ω



Volume 76

Month 2010

Issue 3

## Chilean Earthquake Frequencies

At the request of the IARU and RECNA (Red Chilena Nor Austral De Servicio), Amateurs are asked to keep all IARU Center of Activity Frequencies clear, as health and welfare traffic is being passed in and out of Chile.

As well, the following RECNA frequencies should be avoided:

**28300 khz 28500 khz**

**21200 khz 21350 khz**

**14200 khz 14350 khz**

**7050 khz 7095 khz**

## **The RAC Insurance Program**

The RAC is looking for a dynamic, motivated, client oriented amateur with a background in insurance to help the RAC administer and expand its insurance program. The position includes insurance administration, liaising with clubs and members and marketing of the RAC Insurance program.

Questions and resumes should be directed to the First Vice President, Mr. Ian MacFarquhar, ve9im at [ve9im@rac.ca](mailto:ve9im@rac.ca).

## **The RAC Philanthropy and Grants Program**

The RAC is looking for a dynamic, motivated volunteer to establish a Philanthropy and Grants Program at the RAC. Many amateurs look for ways to leave a legacy and other amateur radio associations [such as the AR-RL] have mechanisms in place to both provide a memory for such amateurs and an opportunity for amateurs to help amateur radio. Potentially coupled with the Philanthropy Program is a new Grants Program to look for third party funding to enhance amateur radio.

If you have any ideas or questions or are interested in submitting a resume for either or both of the Philanthropy or Grants Program please email Bill Unger, Ontario NorthEast Director at [wunger@confederationc.on.ca](mailto:wunger@confederationc.on.ca) or Geoff Bawden, President at [ve4baw@rac.ca](mailto:ve4baw@rac.ca).

## LARC ANNUAL DINNER - DON'T DELAY GETTING YOUR TICKETS

Date: Friday, 23 April 2010

Location: Slovak Legion, Sun Room, 801 Atlantic Ave. (East End).

Symposium: 1800 hours (cash bar).

Dinner: 1830 hours.

Price:\$25

Very special guest speakers are local lawyers Mr. David Shannon, and Mr. Chris Watkins.

They completed a 300-km overland journey to the North Pole, in April 1909, to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Matthew Henson-Robert Peary conquest of the Pole. Mr. Shannon is the first quadriplegic to reach the North Pole, and this makes their journey truly inspiring!

## Sleeping Giant Loppet

One more time , members of LARC got out of bed way too early to help out at the Annual Sleeping Giant Loppet, March 6. Thanks to the following amateurs and friends

VE3ICY Glen Wallace, VA3MVR Mark Vaillant

VE3FAL Fred Lesnick, Mathew Lesnick

VE3WCW Clarence Cotin, VE3RRP Karl Hamilton

VA3OJ Randy Gottfred,

VE3XT Bill Unger and Rita Comuzzi

VA3TBA Chris Chadwick, VE3RVA Bob Hansen

VE3FLB Rob Van Wyck and Bettina Siebenmann

VE3ATC Leo Wehrstedt, VE3XRC Norm Bell

VE3XLB Linda Bell, VE3SNW Ed Baumann

VA3LU Terry Stewardson

**LARC SENATE**

**Keith Fiske VE3JQ**  
**Pat Doherty VE3PD**  
**Dave Kimpton VE3AVS**  
**Laurie Bridgett VE3BCD**  
**Terry Stewardson VA3LU**  
**Ed Baumann VE3SNW**

**LARC EXECUTIVE**

**President**  
**Randy Gottfred VA3OJ**

**Vice-President**  
**Bob Hansen VE3RVA 767-6924**

**Secretary**  
**Karl Hamilton VE3RRP**

**Treasurer**  
**Joe Coghlan VE3TBX 344-6566**

**Directors**  
**Brad Harris VE3MXJ 767-0628**  
**Doug McCormack VE3EFC**  
**Cliff Pratt VA3CLF**  
**Robert Mazur VA3ROM**

**LARC Emergency Coordinator**  
**Brad Harris VE3MXJ**

**ARES District Emergency Coordinator**  
**VE3FAL Fred Lesnick 577-0789**

**CANWARN**  
**VA3JMS John 767-3631**  
**VE3MXJ Brad 767-0628**

**Public Service Events**  
**VA3JMS John 767-3631**

**Accredited Examiner**  
**VE3FAL Fred Lesnick 577-0789**  
**lesnick@tbaytel.net**

**ABOUT US**

The Lakehead Amateur Radio Club (LARC) is an incorporated not for profit group of amateur radio operators in the Thunder Bay area that meet for self education, community service and fellowship. Our meetings are the second Thursday of the month at room 191 McIntyre Building, Confederation College, 7:30 PM. Our postal address is 1100C Memorial Ave. Suite 184, Thunder Bay, Ontario P7B 4A3. This newsletter is published monthly except for July and August by Ed Baumann VE3SNW and questions and submissions may be emailed to ve3snw@shaw.ca

**Lakehead Amateur Radio Club - Treasurer's Report**

Balance on Hand - February 4th, 2010	\$5,355.07
--------------------------------------	------------

**Income**

Annual Dinner Tickets	\$175.00
50/50 Draw	\$8.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$183.00</b>

**Expenses**

Thunder Bay Telephone	\$47.83
Bank Service Charges	\$1.00
Annual Dinner Tickets	\$22.60
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$71.43</b>

Balance on Hand - March 4, 2010	\$5,466.64
---------------------------------	------------

Trailer Account	
Income	
From previous bank	\$891.25
Interest \$0.08	
Expenses	
Trailer Plates & GST	\$47.83
Balance in Trailer Account	\$843.50

Joe "Currency" Coghlan - VE3TBX  
 LARC Treasurer

**LARC OPEN ACCESS REPEATERS**

**VE3YQT(Mount Baldy)147.060 (-600) Phone Patch**

**VE3TBR (St. Joseph's) 146.820 pl 107.2**

**442.075 (+5 MHz)pl 100**  
**144.390 APRS**

**VE3UPP Upsala 145.470 (-600)**

**March**

**HI-Q Journal of the Lakehead Amateur Radio Club 2010**

Minutes for the Lakehead Amateur Radio Club

Bill reports RAC is proceeding smoothly.

*Date: February 11, 2010*

**President, Randy Gottfred VA3OJ Presiding.**

**Guest Speaker:**

Derek Tessier HBSc Environmental Science Energy / Water Conservation Specialist from EcoSuperior Environmental Programs talked about ecoDriving. More info is at [www.ecodriver.org](http://www.ecodriver.org) and [www.ecospuerior.org](http://www.ecospuerior.org). The speaker in March will be Marvin Lassi, speaking about weather basics and reading weather maps.

**Treasurer's Report:**

Joe Coghlan VE3TBX

Joe moved to accept the report as printed in the February Hi-Q. Seconded by Terry Stewardson VA3LU. Passed Unanimously.

**Minutes of Previous Meeting:**

Karl Hamilton VE3RRP moved to accept the January's minutes as printed in the February Hi-Q. Seconded by Terry Stewardson VA3LU. Passed Unanimously.

**Old Business:**

**Public Service**

John Sacek VA3JMS public events coordinator

Karl Hamilton VE3RRP read a letter from the Salvation Army thanking the club for the communications for the Santa Shuffle 5k. The funds raised went to the Community and Family Services Department in Thunder Bay.

**Sleeping Giant Loppet March 6, 2010**

Norm Bell VE3XRC

Norm has the essential positions filled, and welcomed all interested hams to come out and participate on March 6<sup>th</sup>.

**ARES**

Brad Harris VE3MXJ Thunder Bay EC

Brad encouraged all to check in to the Tuesday night VHF Net on VE3YQT at 7pm.

In future meetings he plans to briefly review radio procedures during the ARES report

**Repeater News**

Randy Gottfred VA3OJ

Randy is looking for a UHF rig to use for linking the 10 meter repeater. Terry Stewardson VA3LU reported working on a new Upsala Repeater. He is also working on an Atikokan to Upsala cross-country link with Atikokan hams.

**RAC Report**

Bill Unger VE3XT

**Dinner Meeting in April:**

Bob Hansen VE3RVA

April Dinner meeting will be on Friday April 23<sup>rd</sup> at the Slovak Legion, for \$25.00 meal. There will be 2 guest speakers: Chris Walkins and Dave Shannon, adventurers who went to the North Pole. Tickets on sale tonight. We need forty people to chow down to break even.

**Callsign Wall Plaque**

The callsign plaques are being redesigned. A new price will have to be determined.

**Club Trailer:**

Bob Hansen VE3RVA

Bob was presented with the new trailer plates. The original copies of the ownership papers for the trailer are being kept with the club's Articles of Incorporation, in the secretary's briefcase.

**John Beargrease Dog Sled Race**

The race was attended by Joe Coghlan VE3TBX and Randy Gottfred VA3OJ. There was a 15 – 16 hour spread of finish times. They talked about checkpoint activities, mushers, dogs, vets, and radio operations.

**New Business**

Randy Gottfred VA3OJ mentioned that the Mush for the Cure, breast cancer fundraiser on the Gunflint Trail is coming up on March 13<sup>th</sup>. The race features 6 to 8 dog teams. Randy invited members to attend at Grand Marais, which is close by. For details contact Randy.

50/50 Draw: Robert Mazur VA3ROM

Adjournment moved by: Terry Stewardson VA3LU

Next Executive Meeting: March 4, 2010

Next LARC Meeting: March 11, 2010.

---

**David Toth (1955-2010)**

With regret, we note the passing of Dr. David Toth on February 26 at his home, after a long struggle with brain cancer. David was a member and a past-President of London Centre, ham radio call VE3GYQ, a pilot, an astrophotographer, a well-known amateur astronomer, and an ER physician. At this year's Starfest, Asteroid 154902 was named Toth = 2004 RU247.

From The Atikokan Progress submitted by F. Lesnick  
VE3FAL

## **Pal Lake Tower; Still going strong, 50 years later**

by admin on January 18, 2010

The Pal Lake Tower seems to have more lives than the proverbial cat.

The Royal Canadian Air Force, which ordered its construction about six kilometres north of Atikokan in 1959 as part of the North American early warning system, abandoned the project a few years later, with the tower 95% complete.

The Ontario Ministry of Transportation used it for a short while to provide non-directional beacons for aviation (commercial and military).

A private company (Northern Electric) was contracted to install and maintain radio equipment at the tower, but a tower at the nearby Caland Ore site made it redundant, and it was soon decommissioned.

For at least a few years the Department of Lands and Forests – which actually purchased the tower from the RCAF – used it as a forest fire lookout. That whole program of staffed fire lookout stations was eventually dropped.

By 1972, virtually no one was using the 100-foot structure, except for young Atikokanites – hiking out to Pal and climbing the tower was almost a rite of passage here. James Wrench (JW) Towse, the industrial commissioner at Fort Frances, had a wild idea: move it to Fort Frances as a tourist attraction. He presented the province with a cheque for \$1 – on moose hide – and had the tower disassembled and hauled to Fort Frances. For the next 30 years, it was a popular attraction near Pither's Point Park; the Fort Frances Historical Commission set up an artifact display at the site, and when the Fort Frances Museum was opened in 1978, it operated the tower.

Its deteriorating condition finally led the town of Fort Frances to close it for safety reasons in 2002. But that wasn't enough to kill the Pal Lake Tower.

As part of a waterfront development project – and an offshoot of the land claims process with Native peoples in the area – Fort Frances decided a few years ago to re-locate the tower, as well as the logging tug Hallett (another town waterfront display) to the Sorting Gap Marina.

That move was mostly completed late last year – after architects and engineers puzzled out how the tower was disassembled in 1972, so they could repeat a similar

process as part of the restoration. The Pal Lake Tower will be officially begin life number three (or number five or six, if you count purposes) this spring.

### **Origins**

The tower is actually a heritage artifact from the Cold War.

As relations between the United States and Soviet Russia deteriorated after World War II, and long-range bomber technology improved, fears of a surprise attack from across the Arctic mounted. By 1950, Canada and the U.S. were working on a continental early warning system.

The first line of defense, geographically, was the DEW (Distant Early Warning) Line in the far North (70°N). It was built in 1955-57, with a huge effort (25,000 people, mostly Canadians, were involved) in harsh conditions. There were 63 sites, 58 on Canadian soil.

The DEW Line was designed to detect a Soviet bomber attack long before it could reach major cities. Early warning would give US forces enough time to launch intercepting aircraft. But, shortly after it was completed, the development of intercontinental ballistic missiles made the DEW Line almost useless. It could detect missile attack – but nowhere near soon enough to allow a defensive response.

Nevertheless, the line remains operational, monitoring air activity in the region, and helping Canada assert its sovereignty in the Arctic. In 1985, much of the line was converted to the North Warning System, and in 1990 the U.S. pulled out, turning operations of the Canadian stations over to the Canadian Forces. The NWS consists of 13 long-range radar stations (11 in Canada, of which 8 are former DEW Line sites) and 39 short-range radars (36 in Canada). NORAD operates the NWS out of CFB North Bay.

The Mid-Canada Line, or the McGill Fence, was a series of military sites, mostly along the 55th parallel, designed to function as a second line of detection. Started in 1951, it wasn't fully operational until 1958, and was superfluous by the early 1960s, thanks to improving technology. It was shut down in 1964-65.

### **Pine Tree Line**

The first line of defense to go into operation was actually the Pine Tree Line, which went live in 1952-1953 along the 50th parallel. The Pine Tree Line was composed of 44 long-range radar stations and six US Air Force manned 'gap filler' radar stations. The most notable of these manned gap stations, from an NWO perspective, was in Sioux Lookout. It operated as an

American base for several years, was turned over to the RCAF in 1962, and operated as a long-range radar base up until 1987.

It was as part of this Pine Tree Line that the Pal Lake Tower was conceived – it was to be one of six unmanned gap fillers in the Pine Tree Line.

Originally, each gap filler site was to have two buildings and a single radar tower. The contract let for the Pal Lake Tower in the early 1960s was worth just under \$140,000. Work was well underway at the site by August, 1962, when the RCAF deferred the gap filler program for a year. The Pal Lake Tower was eventually completed, but the whole gap filler program was finally dropped.

That's when the facility became something of a nomad. The province's Department of Lands and Forests bought it for the District Forester in Fort Frances in 1964. Details of its days as a fire lookout are sketchy, but a call by the Fort Frances Museum for memories of the tower did produce a story from Dave Erwin of Fort Frances.

He was working on the construction Highway 11 between Atikokan and Fort Frances in 1967, and remembers visiting a friend, Donald Hughes (also of Fort Frances) who was working at the tower for Lands and Forests.

"Compared to other towers I had visited, the Pal Lake tower was like visiting a five star hotel," writes Erwin. "According to Don, the tower had begun its life as a microwave relay tower and as such was all steel construction. Unlike the older towers [with] wooden huts that swayed and creaked in the breeze, even in strong winds I never felt this tower sway, even a little."

"The greatest luxury was that instead of a 50 to 75 foot ladder to climb everyday, Pal Lake Tower had the steel stairs to climb. If I remember correctly, the Pal Lake Tower was the tallest in the region and the ladder leading to the flat roof that once was a platform for microwave relay antennae was a short climb to a great place to sun bathe in good weather – so long as you weren't too intimidated by standing on top of the tower a hundred feet in the air with no hand rails."

Were you among those who looked out over Pal Lake and environs in the 1960s and early 70s? Take a walk up memory lane at the Fort Frances Lookout Tower in the spring.

(Based on material collected by Pam Cain of the Fort Frances Museum)

[www.pinetreeline.org](http://www.pinetreeline.org)

Dave Erwin

Some food for thought here in these 2 stories, this happened South of the border almost a month ago and the folks in Grand Marais were without phone service of any kind.

One article I read even made mention that the call out tree could not be used with the system down, no 911 etc.... The crew from the radio club pulled through again shining like a new star in the sky..

Fred

VE3FAL

DEC ARES Amethyst District

## **Communication with outside world lost-almost**

### **Jane Howard**

What would happen if Cook County were suddenly cut off from communication with the rest of the world? What if no one could make a long distance phone call, send or receive email, or even get his or her cell phone to work? About mid-morning Tuesday, January 26, 2010, the county found out. A communications outage, rumored to have been caused by a fiber optic cable that was melted by road steaming to clear ice from a road in downtown Duluth, shut down Internet, cell phone and long distance services in three counties.

If you called 911, you would have heard a busy signal. Even calls between telephone prefixes within the county would not go through – 387 could not contact 475; 663 could not contact 388. What if someone arrived at the hospital emergency room needing a helicopter ride to Duluth?

According to Dr. Sandy Stover of the North Shore Hospital and Sawtooth Mountain Clinic, the county's emergency management system clicked into gear quickly and efficiently. Local ham radio operators dropped whatever they were doing and headed to places like the hospital, where they could relay messages that needed to be sent outside the county.

The scanner was busy with law enforcement trying to stay in touch.

Some places, such as the Sawtooth Mountain Clinic, slowed down. Dr. Stover said they could not access patient charts since their server is in Duluth. They had to rely on the information patients gave them to make decisions regarding which medications to prescribe – or not prescribe. People outside the 387 phone prefix

could not call in to cancel their appointments, so there were a few holes in the schedule. The doctors couldn't access the Internet for medical information or call a consultant for advice on a case. Neither they nor the nurses could place their notes into patient files. It was all work that had to be put off for another, undoubtedly busier, day.

According to one source, Jacob Muus summed it all up by saying, "I'm going to bed early tonight."

Maybe Jacob was already asleep at 9:53 p.m. that night when Cook County was able to access the world once again.

Here are some things people couldn't do because of the outage:

Call 911.- Send medical test results to specialists for evaluation. - If you were a grocery store or restaurant, place an order for your next shipment of food - Conduct business outside the county from a home office. - Conduct research on the Internet. - Access and submit assignments that were due in online classes. - Receive hotel reservations or cancellations. - Send or receive faxes. - Make plane reservations. - Call to tell someone you would not be on the flight they were coming to pick you up from - Order prescription refills outside the county. - Have your insurance company authorize payment for a prescription you needed to pick up locally. - Get cash from an ATM. - Wire-transfer money from a bank, or receive a wire transfer - Run credit card transactions. - Pay bills online or by phone. - Buy or sell stock. - Upload the latest online edition of the Cook County News-Herald - Waste your time on YouTube. - And worst of all, if you are - a teenager, you could not text your friends.

## Citizens share concerns after regional communications outage

Jane Howard

The county survived a communications breakdown with the outside world Tuesday, January 26, 2010, but proponents of countywide fiber optic infrastructure believe the event is an example of the need for a better system. For about 12 hours that day, a break in Qwest's fiber optic line to Cook County left residents, businesses, government offices, and emergency systems without

long-distance phone service, Internet access, or cell phone coverage. Fortunately, nothing really terrible happened, but it could have.

The outage was believed to have been caused by a ruptured steam line that melted a fiber optic line in Duluth, but at the February 9 county board meeting, Commissioner Bob Fenwick said neither Qwest nor the company that runs steam lines through Duluth were taking any blame.

" According to a report by Emergency Management Director Jim Wiinanen, the outage covered a portion of St. Louis County and all of Lake and Cook counties, affecting a population of 16,427 over 3,543 square miles. Wiinanen stated in his report that businesses seemed to have been affected more than government offices, but public safety was jeopardized.

A report by Sheriff Mark Falk stated that the outage "had significant impact on public safety" – particularly on the 911 system, which did not work. Since phone calls could be made within each of the county's four exchanges – 475, 388, 387, and 663 – volunteer firefighters were stationed at the fire halls and communicated with the Law Enforcement Center via radio. WTIP Radio broadcast fire hall phone numbers so people knew where to call in case of emergency.

Law enforcement, stationed across the county, could not access information on callers or maps to their locations. According to Sheriff Falk, officer safety was compromised because they could not check databases for stolen vehicles or arrest warrants when they stopped drivers.

"Our ability to respond and provide timely response was severely impacted," Falk wrote, "and could have compromised our ability to provide for the public safety needs of our community, adding much time to our response. ... The impact that this had on public safety could have been significant. If there would have been a critical incident it could have been catastrophic, compromising the safety of the public, first responders, and law enforcement."

The U.S. Border Patrol responded to questions from Wiinanen by writing that they communicated within the county by radio. "Our radio communications are fed back to Grand Forks via phone line from our main repeater," they wrote, "so we were unable to communicate with both our dispatcher and other agents in the state. We attempted to use a relay through Lake County to pass on information, but I am not sure our message made it through. The biggest deficiency we noticed was

with the satellite phone communications. We were unable to establish a signal with our satellite phone. I believe this is an issue with the phone, the service or a combination of both."

The outage disabled National Weather Service broadcasts, since they go through phone lines. Ham radio operators were stationed at North Shore Hospital so they could call outside the county for help as needed, but 58 people with significant medical conditions could not have used their "First Call" emergency buttons if needed. Approximately 70 people in Cook County with emergency medical monitoring devices could not be monitored. Students working online through Cook County Higher Ed missed classes and homework deadlines.

Wiinanen polled entities throughout the community on the effect of the outage. One response from

Grand Marais hotel said,

Due to the communication issue on Tuesday, we consequently had no reservations taken during the day. As a result, last night (Wednesday) we had zero rooms at Aspen Lodge, one at Shoreline, none at Cobblestone Cove, two at Super 8. That is very unusual for January. We are by no means full during these days, but it is unusual to be as empty as we were."

A Devil Track Resort representative wrote, "We rely on the snowmobile demographic. They often wait until the last minute to make reservations depending on where there is fresh snow. After struggling through a winter with little snow, we get a dumping Sunday and Monday...then we couldn't send out the snow report to the 4,000 people who have signed up to know when we get snow! Those who had heard we had snow couldn't call or get a hold of us. Many made reservations elsewhere. Losing phone service for an entire day is detrimental for little places like us."

Someone from Rockwood Lodge wrote, "The rule of thumb is, if you don't answer, someone else will, so a call missed is a sale lost."

City Hall responded by saying there was a "significant loss of productivity for the day. ...There was a noticeable lack of calls as well, but most of the business we do with the community was unaffected."

A Cook County government representative wrote, "If there were any deadlines during this outage the consequences could have been significant. Because the event was relatively short-term, county staff was tasked with other duties not requiring access to telecommunications."

Wiinanen listed three goals he would like to see the county achieve in case of similar outages in the future. He would like to ensure a reliable means for the public to request emergency assistance, for the hospital to communicate to centers that provide higher levels of care, and for public safety entities to adequately provide information to the public.

Commissioner Bob Fenwick will be advocating with telecommunications companies and legislators for a more reliable system with a backup. He called this "an opportunity to get everybody to the table to try to solve the problem." He believes Cook County may be able to influence companies like Qwest to put more resources into the county, especially if the county is moving toward establishing its own fiber optic network.

"I think everybody did the best they could with what we had," Sheriff Falk told the county board.

One respondent to Wiinanen's poll wrote, "Tuesday really pointed out how isolated we are when all but a couple of the communications options blow out. Fifty years ago, people probably wouldn't have noticed, or cared, that the phone lines were down. It was just part of living here. However, with the large number of ways people are connected these days, losing those systems gives people a very heavy hit."

Submitted by

Fred Lesnick

VE3FAL - ARES guy.

### **Winter / Spring 2010 BWARC Newsletter is now available!**

The combined Winter / Spring Edition of the Boundary Waters Amateur Radio Club newsletter is now available. This newsletter is again a little bit larger than normal because we've been involved in quite a few events -- with a lot of photos to share!

Click here for a direct link to the newsletter: <http://www.boreal.org/bwarc/CurrentNews.pdf>

As always, the current newsletter, along with a link to download Adobe Acrobat reader, is available at the website: <http://www.boreal.org/bwarc>

### **WOMEN & AMATEUR RADIO**

<http://groups.google.ca/group/clara-clarion/web/women-in-early-radio>

# March 2010

**And where is my flying car**

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
	ARES 2 m Net		Coffee night at Boston on Arthur			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11 LARC Meeting	12	13 Mush for the Cure	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22 Intro to Salvation Army Dis- aster Serv- ices	23	24	25	26	27 Safe Food Handling course	28
29	30	31			Annual Dinner April 23rd	